

SHORT BREAK TO PARIS HUGE SUCCESS!



Read all about it! Pages 5-6

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Coming up

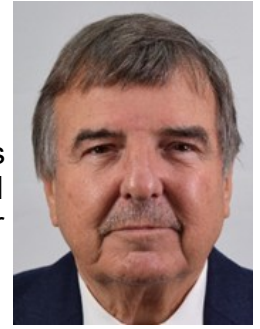
- Mon 9th June 10:30am -
Coffee morning - the Old Auction House
- Thurs 19th June 2:30pm - **AGM**
- Thurs 19th June 6:30pm - **Music for Midsummer**
- Fri 27th June 10:30am -
Coffee morning—Trinity Theatre
- Mon 14th July 10:30am -
Coffee morning - the Old Auction House



THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Greetings all

Our Annual General Meeting takes place on June 19th at 2.30pm in The Wells Church Hall. I do hope you will take the opportunity to attend. The meeting will include the opportunity to share some refreshments and chat. Please go to our website to access relevant reports and agenda.



Meanwhile, as I contemplate my days, I am drawn to matters of optimism and health. There is much that may concern us as we witness modern-day goings on, such as wars around the world, and changes in the environment and climate. Despite such concerns continued optimism and hope help us keep a positive attitude and contribute positively to our health and lifespan. Our optimism is strengthened by having purpose, staying active physically and socially, and continual learning. It's good to know that participation in our u3a can help us stay optimistic.

Chris (07788 598472)

FINAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The AGM will be held at the Wells Church Hall
on Thursday 19 June 2025 at 2.30pm.**

Anyone unable to attend who would like to appoint a proxy should obtain a Proxy Notice from [Sian Shaw](#) by email or phone her on 07835 300193. Proxy Notices must be returned to her at least 7 days before the AGM.

All AGM documentation will be downloadable from our website no later than 29th May, 21 days prior to the meeting.

The AGM will be followed by refreshments

We hope as many people as possible will attend.

Please send apologies for absence to [Sian Shaw](#) or phone her on 07835 300193

Tickets now selling fast!

Music for Midsummer

Green Street Blues



Will be singing at the Old Auction House on

Thursday 19th June 2025

6.00 for 6.30 start

A light buffet supper will be served during the interval

£20pp

And the bar will be open for you to buy hot & cold drinks

Please find the application form at the end of the newsletter

The next Daytime Disco will be in the afternoon of Tuesday 15th July
Our singer, Jessica Louisa has asked for requests and suggestions for songs/anthems
from 1960's, 70's and 80's.

Polite suggestions from those who intend to attend please to the [Groups Co-ordinator](#)

DAYTIME DISCO
TUESDAY 15TH JULY PM

THE MANOR HOUSE
CHURCH ROAD, TW



£8pp TWu3a members & friends welcome

Monthly Meetings

As you will all be aware, there is no speaker this month because it is the AGM.

Last Month's talk



Christoph Bull DICKENS IN KENT

May's talk saw speaker Christoph Bull take us on an energetic aural tour of Charles Dickens' favourite North Kent locations, often the settings for his novels. For example, Rochester's Restoration House was the inspiration for Satis House in *Great Expectations*.

Dickens lived in our county most of his life and, though he died 155 years ago, his social observations are still engaging and relevant today. By sharing passages from Dickens' novels that reflected his eclectic life and contacts, Christoph inspired many of us to read them again.

A really popular talk.

Aileen Muir



Looking ahead....

July's Monthly meeting is on the 17th

Living Well, Living Long. The Surprising Keys to Lasting Health

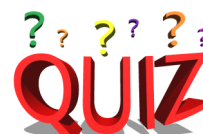
What if the key to living a longer, healthier life isn't just about what you eat, but how you live?

In this talk, Katy shares the surprising habits that truly support longevity—including how to manage stress, build connections and respond rather than react to life's challenges.

With warmth, humour, and practical tools like her simple "Peace" method, she will show you how small shifts can create more peace, more energy, and more joy—at any age.

Sounds like one not to be missed!

TEATIME ZOOM



Why not join Sandra for a stress-free fun quiz?

The last Monday of each month at 4.30pm

Contact [Sandra](#) for a zoom invitation.

Please don't forget that any TWu3a members can request a link to the hybrid monthly meetings by requesting a Zoom link from the [secretary](#).

SHORT BREAK MAY 2025 - PARIS HIGHLIGHTS

VERSAILLES didn't disappoint despite the massive crowds. Our guide gave us a detailed and witty historical background to life in Louis the XIV's time. We made it to the famed Hall of Mirrors where amazingly some of the glass was original, an awe-inspiring sight with more ceiling paintings of extraordinary complexity and beauty. Some of us took a little train around the gardens with its long avenues of trees. There were vast areas of water, some spouting lovely fountains and one with an extraordinary gold chariot emerging from the water. Baroque music playing nearby. All in all a wonderful, if somewhat tiring, experience. **ALISON**



Only 35 minutes from our hotel was the MUSEE D'ORSAY. With a lot of patience in scanning our entry ticket we were eventually let through. This magnificent building, originally a railway station, is huge with several ornate clocks — the most famous one on the 5th floor through which you have stunning views over Paris. The museum was very crowded, but we saw some wonderful statues on the ground floor. Many of us headed straight to see the Impressionist paintings and sculptures by Degas. With a couple of hours free for lunch some of us crossed the road to the Tuileries gardens to sit with a glass of wine and watch all Parisian life go by. **ANNE**

A day in Paris ended with a cruise down the Seine. What could be better? All those views we'd seen during the Olympics. Leaving from the Eiffel Tower offered a unique way to admire the golden dome of Les Invalides, the Grand Palais, and the Pont Alexandre bridge with its golden statues. Nobody was going to miss la Cathedrale de Notre Dame, rebuilt and magnificent, despite the remaining scaffolding. All giving us great opportunities to take lots of French photos! **PHIL**



MONET'S GARDEN.

It was a warm sunny day to see Monet's paintings brought to life in his beautiful gardens. The famous Japanese bridge was draped with long racemes of mauve, pink and white wisteria. Then the flower garden with pathways bordered by flag irises and beds full of tulips and pansies. We finished at Monet's pink house with reproductions of many of his paintings hung throughout. **CHRIS**



A perfect accompaniment to Monet's Garden was a visit to a Giverny cider farm where Christoph single-handedly makes cider with 10 different varieties of apple from his 4000 apple trees. The whole process is completely mechanised and done by Christoph himself. He produces apple juice, dry cider, an aperitif and Calvados. We got to sample them all!! **BARRY**



AMIENS was our lunch stop on the way home. The outstanding part was the cathedral of Notre Dame, the largest medieval cathedral in the world. At Quai Belu by the river many of the group had a meal of the local delicacy, the Ficelle Picarde, a savoury crepe packed with cheese, ham and mushrooms. Delicious. A great way to finish a most memorable visit before taking the shuttle back to England. **ROGER**

No rest for Sandra! Look what's coming...

HOTEL EXCLUSIVELY FOR US!

FLIGHTS FROM GATWICK

MERANO

FREE EVENING BAR

LAKE CALDERO and BOAT

6 DAYS

VINEYARD VISIT with WINE TASTING

BOLZANO

LAKE GARDA

HALF BOARD

ITALIAN/ENGLISH SPEAKING TOUR GUIDE

MAXIMUM 37 PLACES

Drama of the Dolomites

Short Break May 2026

All members of TWu3a must be aware that, before participating in any u3a activity or visit, they should ensure the activity is suitable for them. They should take into account their personal ability level, their current health status and the information provided by Group Contacts or event organisers for the venue/route to be visited.

Outings Coordinator

The next outing will be to Dorney Court, Runnymede and Ankerwycke. Dorney Court is one of England's most uniquely beautiful Tudor farmhouses set amidst acres of mature parkland and encircled by well-tended yew hedges. The remarkable and characterful house is Grade 1 listed and designated as being of outstanding architectural and historical interest. We will split into several small groups on a guided tour around the house and church. Then there will be a short drive to Runnymede and Ankerwycke to have a light lunch, or picnic if you prefer, overlooking the river Thames. The application form can be found at the end of the newsletter or by clicking [here](#).

May's outing to a National Trust property and farm was to Wimpole Hall, a review with photos by one of our members follows below.

On Thursday 12th June we are visiting Amberley Museum, a review of this trip will be in July's newsletter.

Joan Young

May's Outing to Wimpole Hall

On the hottest day of the year we visited Wimpole Hall Estate, a large country estate in Cambridgeshire on land that has been farmed and lived on for 2000 years. Today the estate comprises the 17th century mansion Wimpole Hall, landscaped gardens by Capability Brown, a historic walled kitchen garden and glasshouse, and a working farm focused on preserving rare breeds.



Wimpole Hall has many magnificent rooms to explore, designed by popular architect of the era, Sir John Soane. Most spectacular is the Yellow Dining Room – a lavishly decorated space to host concerts and grand balls, created for the 2nd Earl of Hardwicke whose family owned the estate for 250 years. The room was inserted into the middle of the existing house and required a total of seven ground and first floor rooms to be removed to accommodate the soaring domed ceiling. We also saw the Library whose walls were lined with 10,000 books, and a Dining Room gloriously

decorated to host Queen Victoria.

Wimpole Hall was bought by Captain and Mrs Elsie Bambridge in 1939, the only surviving daughter of Rudyard Kipling. The couple embarked on filling the empty rooms with furniture and furnishings to make it more 'homely', funded by revenue from her father's books. Elsie's personal Study Room and several smaller bedrooms were in contrast to the splendour of the rest of the house. In the basement, the Chapel was a chilly and somewhat eerie space, created in the 1720's, with walls adorned with elaborate paintings of saints and cherubs that seemed to be hovering 'ghostlike' above us!



Outdoors in the hot sun, we explored the splendid gardens with lakes, woodland trails with many diverse species of trees. The 'must-see' 4-acre Walled Kitchen Garden is dominated by an imposing glasshouse which has been re-created from the original 17th century building designed by Sir John Soane. The whole estate is committed to sustainable farming, and production of fruits and vegetables including many exotic species.

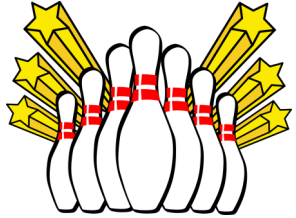
Mo Shaw

Groups Coordinator's Notes
TW u3a groups.....by the members, for the members

The new **Italian Beginners Conversation group** held its start-up meeting at the Trinity coffee morning. There are currently about 10 members who plan to meet fortnightly. They would welcome Italian speaking members to advise, or join, them so if you would like more details then please contact the [Groups Co-ordinator](#)

A reminder about the ideas that have come from TWu3a members about groups they would like to start - or join.

a **10 Pin Bowling group**...but we currently need a little more interest to get it off the ground.



a **piano-playing group** (you would need a piano, already be a player and willing to visit each other's homes)

a **Beginners French Conversation group**

a **2nd Out & About Visits group**

a **Kent "Church Crawlers" group**



Anyone interested? Contact [Groups Coodinator](#)

Group News

The Galleries and Museums Group's May outing was to Greenwich. Starting off with a trip down the Thames on the Uber boat, the day was spent at the Old Royal Naval College which

is a UNESCO world heritage site with over 600 years of rich history. The highlight was visiting the beautiful Painted Hall which features over 200 characters on its opulent ceiling. We also visited the Chapel and the exhibition at the Visitor's Centre. A very nice lunch was had at The Old Brewery and a wander around the wonderful grounds with lovely river views concluded the day.



Caroline Aitken

Group News Continued

STORK WALK

The **Four Seasons birding group** visited the rewilded Knepp estate south of Horsham to see nesting white storks. The birds were reintroduced in 2016 and became the first breeding storks in Britain for more than 600 years in 2020. Last year 53 stork chicks fledged at Knepp.

The 3,500 acre Knepp Estate was left to Charles Burrell and his wife, journalist Isabella Tree, by Burrell's grandparents and for 17 years they tried to make it work as a farm. But geology was against them - the estate sits on 320 metres of Low Weald clay over a bedrock of limestone, and the land set like concrete in the summer and turned to wet mud in the winter. Debts mounted, and in 2000 they decided to sell the dairy herds and farm machinery. Rewilding began a year later, and today the estate is an internationally-recognised 'biodiverse wilderness area' in the Low Weald of Sussex. Longhorn cattle, Exmoor ponies, Tamworth pigs, beavers and three species of deer roam wild across the estate, maintaining a landscape that has attracted growing populations of endangered species including nightingales and turtle doves, along with rare butterflies like the purple emperor, and beetles.



The Four Seasons birders got good sightings of storks on their nests with chicks as well as in the air - where their 2.15m wingspans carried them on thermals high into the sky.

Erik Brown



London Explorers 4

...visited the William Morris gallery in Walthamstow. It was an amazing and really interesting exhibition and we had an excellent tour guide who explained about William Morris' life. This was very well organised by Rosmarie and Veronica.

Suzette Elliott-West

The SOLO group visited the churches at Capel and Tudeley on Saturday to see the Marc Chagall stained glass windows, which were magnificent. We had a lovely lunch at the George and Dragon.



Anne Edney

Group News Continued

PUB QUIZ GROUP

Two u3a teams reaped success at The Brecknock Arms this month, with the **lplods** coming first with 107 points **and Bringing Up the Rear** coming third, with 94 points; narrowly beating the third u3a team, **The Optimists** on 93 points.

In nine rounds the teams had to answer such challenging questions as: What is the longest running TV sitcom in Great Britain? What was Status Quo's only UK No.1? Questions on France included, what is the longest river in France and where was Jean of Arc executed? Connections – Who played Bernard Wooley in Yes Minister and what was the stage name of Mary Kathleen Collins, actress and model? In Colours, we had to name the colour from the foreign word, so Rozowy in Polish, Hvit in Danish and Sininen in Finnish? Good Luck. Then there was a new innovation titled Five Letter Words, where you could only change the first letter. Mr Hill, Mr Lamb and Mr White? Can you work out their names? For Geography lovers, what two nations are found either side of the Panama Canal (Panama)? For the Marathon round teams had to match all 31 numbered areas of the Shipping Forecast against the list of names. We listen to the Shipping Forecast, but do we know the where these areas are? Have a look online, I am sure you will be surprised, if not puzzled by some.



Winnings totalled £15 and have been donated to Parkinson's UK. Our total raised for charity now stands at £5802

Dick Hoare

Answers: Last of the Summer Wine. Down Down. Loire, Rouen. Derek Fowlds, Bo Derek. The connection was Derek (Surprise). Pink, White and Blue. Harry, Larry and Barry. Costa Rica and Colombia.

The T team step out again!



On a wonderfully clear sunny day, eleven of the **T team** climbed nearly two hundred steps, 118 being spiral, to the top of the Trinity Tower. We were able to catch our breath on two levels before emerging into the sunshine.

The views over the town were fantastic. We were able to see four churches: St. James', St. Peter's, St. John's and St. Mark's as well as the Town Hall etc, although we were not particularly impressed with the monstrosity that is going up on the site of the old cinema!

We had two very knowledgeable guides telling us the history of the Church and its connection with Decimus Burton. It was a very pleasant couple of hours.

Stella Westrup



Important information

Forthcoming Events For Your Diary

17 June 2025	Meeting for new Volunteers
19 June 2025	Annual General Meeting
19 June 2025	Music For Midsummer
17 July 2025	Monthly meeting: Living Well, Living Long- The Surprising Keys to Lasting Health

New members

A big welcome to the **15** new members who joined in May

Your Committee

Chairman	Chris Woodward	07788 598472
Deputy Chair	Fiona Findlay	07872 169146
Secretary	Sian Shaw	07835 300193
Treasurer	Mike Duckett	07770 325154
Group Coordinator	Lindsay Hasell	01892 673180
Membership Secretary	Judy Horwood	01892 537601
Outings Coordinator	Joan Young	0750 4919081
Events Coordinator	Philippa Bernstein	07788 498606
Newsletter	Bridget Sands	07944 438223

A Message from the Editor

Any publication is only as good as its contributors and I do hope you will continue to support the Newsletter as it is such an easy and effective way to communicate u3a matters with you all.

The deadline for contributions is always the last day of the month. Please email to [Bridget](mailto:bridget@u3a.org.uk) by **JUNE 30th** and attach as a Word document. **Thank you**

Please note that photos taken at u3a events are often used in publicity material. If you do not want your picture used in such ways please make a member of the committee aware of this at the event you are attending. Thank you.

TW u3a is a Registered Charity 1018835

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

u3a Office

Keep up to date with u3a Office news on the website:
www.u3a.org.uk or write to:
The Third Age Trust, Room 104, Lenta Business Centre,
156 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8EN

Tunbridge Wells u3a Event Application Form: **Music For Midsummer**

EVENT NAME & CODE: Music ORGANISER: [Fiona](#)

DATE: **THURSDAY 19th JUNE 2025 at 6:00PM for a 6:30 start**

VENUE: **THE OLD AUCTION HOUSE, THE PANTILES, LINDEN PARK ROAD, TUNBRIDGE WELLS TN2 5QL**

TICKETS: **£20.00 PER PERSON includes a buffet supper**

And the bar will be open for you to buy your own drinks

Please be aware all food is prepared in kitchens that are not free of wheat, nuts etc.

To apply please click [here](#) (twu3adeputychair@gmail.com) to email Fiona and include your name, mobile/home phone number, date of payment with the Name of the Event and Code (as above).

To pay by BACS: make an online transfer to: **Tunbridge Wells u3a**

Sort code: 40-52-40

Account No: 00024097

Reference: MUSIC Your Surname

To pay by cheque: please post your application & cheque to

Music for Midsummer, 12 Faraday Lodge, Badger's Holt, Tunbridge Wells TN2 3DX

Add your email or telephone number for confirmation of receipt.

Please note that once money has been paid in advance, full refunds will only be offered if your place can be filled by another u3a member.

.....
APPLICATION FORM

Event name and Code: MUSIC

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to Tunbridge Wells u3a

Name and mobile/home phone number

.....
If you are paying for another u3a member, please include their details below

Name and mobile/home phone number

